



CONSTRUCTING INTEGRATED RURAL TOURISM INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

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Abstract

This study is based on the principle of tourism supply and demand to integrate the concept of integrated rural tourism and destination branding. This study has the following purposes: 1) to explore the relationship between integrated rural tourism, rural capital and destination branding, 2) to analyze and evaluate the rural tourism innovation development and its integrated indicators, and 3) to construct and analyze integrated rural tourism innovation development indicators in Taiwanese context. Delphi method and Analytic Hierarchy Process are used to construct an integrated rural tourism development indicator structure. The obtained indicator structure has a total of 4 subsystems, 12 dimensions, and 52 indicators. The weight of subsystem is 0.37 for rural destination branding, 0.288 for rural tourism sustainability, 0.173 for rural tourism capital, and 0.169 for rural tourism networking. The research findings draw the following conclusions. First, the evaluative indicators were established based on the concept of holistic rural development, and the finding suggested that building stakeholders' mutual interest and interaction is important. Second, destination branding strengthens the foundation of integrated development, in turn increasing destination identity and respectfulness of the destination. Finally, a rurality of evaluative indicators used in a rural context can discriminate them from other indi-

cators. This study suggests future research can take a comparative study with other region or explore dimensions from different stakeholders' perspectives.

Key Words: Rural Tourism; Integrated Rural Tourism Innovation Development; Destination Branding; Evaluative Indicator.

Introduction

In recent years, the willingness of domestic tourism has increased. The government has implemented a number of policies to strengthen visitors' traveling to various parts of Taiwan for sightseeing and tourism. With the help of the aforementioned policies, tourism operators in various destinations have gradually developed various tourist itineraries to enhance the development of various destinations, and the tourists have more diversified options for domestic tourism. Rural tourism has become one of the domestic tourism options, and it has become a way to develop and improve the living standards and environmental quality of local people in rural areas (Page & Getz, 1997; Richard & Sharpley, 1997). Based on the strong interdependence between rural tourism and rural areas, if there is no one that can operate a vibrant countryside or has attractive rural resources, there will be no products available to the rural tourism industry to sell to consumers. At the same time, rural tourism is considered to be a driving force of protecting the complete rural

resources. In addition to improving the rural economy, it also helps maintain the rural lifestyle (Richard & Sharpley, 1997).

From the perspective of tourism supply and demand, the development of rural tourism often requires the integration of different factors, including cooperation of government units, community residents, tourists, tourism operators, professional academic units, local industries, non-profit organizations, and local tourism resources. The level of interaction and complexity are highly challenging. In recent years, foreign scholars and rural research institutions have begun to put forward integrated views. In addition to including the perspective of local residents, the Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) model starts from the destination, considering the integration elements of culture, society, economy, environment, etc., and including seven dimensions: stakeholder networking, tourism scale, tourism endogeneity, sustainability, tourism embeddedness, tourism complementarity, and local empowerment (Clark & Chabrel, 2007; Saxena, Clark, Oliver, & Ilbery, 2007;

Cawley, & Gillmor, 2008). The integrated destination development model can lead to regional economic prosperity, and the essence of the model has a starting point of low-destructiveness for natural scenic spots and artificial communities. Therefore, in order to have the opportunity to strike a balance for the destination development, the complex multi-relation and the cognition, use, and integration of resources must be taken into consideration. As such, the integrated rural tourism perspective has its research necessity, and exploring the relationship and connection between residents, tourism industry, tourism resources, or even government units in the rural tourism development has become an important subject of this study.

For the sustainability of destinations, in addition to properly utilizing local tourism resources, connecting stakeholders, integrating the tourism industry, and strengthening community capabilities, tourists are another important factor driving rural development. When tourists go to destinations, while using rural resources, they bring economic benefits and cause different impacts thereto. Tourists also get different experiences and travel images in the process. The concept that tourists need multiple experiences is gradually forming a destination branding model (Cai, 2002). Destination branding allows

tourists to gain a perception of the area and create relationships and connections with destinations (Nickerson & Moisey, 1999). Furthermore, consistent brand elements can shape tourists' travel image of destinations and strengthen brand identity (Cai, 2002). Therefore, destination branding can affect tourists' impressions of destinations, strengthen the resources of the destinations, and further connect integrated development. Indicators can help an area in evaluating the relevant development status. For the future decision-making, establishing indicators can evaluate the status of integrated rural tourism development in Taiwan. In short, this study has the following purposes: 1) to explore the meanings between integrated rural tourism, rural capital and destination branding, 2) to analyze and evaluate the rural tourism development and its integrated indicators, and 3) to construct and analyze integrated rural tourism development indicators in Taiwanese context.

Literature Review

Rural tourism

If discussing the definition of rural tourism by the angle of the early geospatial space categorization, as long as it is a tourism or recreation behavior that occurs in rural areas, it is called rural tourism. *The Commission of*

European Communities (1987) states the definition of rural tourism, noting that it is not just agricultural tourism or rural village tourism, as long as the tourism occurs in rural areas, it should be called rural tourism. Whelan (1991) explains that rural tourism is actually similar to ecological tourism, green tourism, and nature tourism. Rural tourism is an activity that takes place in rural areas and includes agricultural tourism, rural village activities, nature trails, and rural village tourist sites (Lane, 1994; Youell, 1998). Rural tourism provides a space that is different from the city life as well as experiential recreational activities, allowing tourists to achieve educational significance and leisure purpose in the process. Lane (1994) believes that the most basic form of rural tourism should have the following characteristics: (1) located in rural areas; (2) the rural functions are composed of small businesses, open spaces, natural environments, historic sites, traditional society and traditional customs; and (3) the rural scale (such as buildings and environment) should be small scale and small size. Rural tourism includes the characteristics of enjoying the local landscape and interacting with and contacting the local cultural environment while emphasizing experiential activities at the same time. It integrates production, life, and ecological concept, which is tourism

that can satisfy tourists' visits to rural areas. For the development of rural tourism to be successful, many factors must be considered. For example, Wilson, Fesenmaier, Fesenmaier, & Van Es (2001) proposed 10 successful elements of rural tourism development as follows: 1. comprehensive package of tourism support; 2. good leadership; 3. support and participation of local government; 4. adequate funding for tourism development; 5. strategic planning; 6. industry coordinating and cooperating with local people; 7. coordination and cooperation of rural tourism; 8. information and technical support for tourism development and marketing; 9. good tourism bureau or department; and 10. wide range support from residents in the community with regards to the tourism. These elements reflect the particularity of the rural areas and the fact the rural areas must attach great importance to the integration of people and things in the community, especially that the residents are the main bodies in the rural areas. When developing rural tourism, the residents' positive support for tourism is an important determining factor for the development of tourism activities.

Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT)

Integrated rural tourism has become a way to connect rural policies,

resources, agriculture, and tourism. It explores the seven major aspects that include stakeholder networking, tourism scale, tourism endogeneity, sustainability, tourism embeddedness, tourism complementarity, and local empowerment (Clark & Chabrel, 2007; Saxena, Clark, Oliver, & Ilbery, 2007; Cawley & Gillmor, 2008). The integrated rural tourism, based on the theory of tourism development, considers various resources, including cultural, social, environmental, and economic uses as well as suitable stakeholders, so as to develop effective tourism promotion methods that form a part of rural development strategies (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008). The word “integrated” refers to constructing an overview of the development results of the overall tourism industry in the region that include environmental, social, cultural, and economic aspects, meaning that if those elements can be well integrated, it will create more value than having not such integration. The concept of integration is similar to partnerships, connecting local stakeholders, networks and resources to work together. Its concepts can include spatial integration, human resource integration, institutional integration, innovation integration, economic integration, social integration, policy integration, time integration, and community integration (Saxena et al., 2007). Therefore, the

main purpose of IRT is to understand the complex nature of rural tourism (environment, economy and society) and the role of local tourism stakeholders, while promoting the integration of environment, economy, society and culture in terms of tourism. It empowers local residents and is beneficial to the vast rural system. The seven aspects confirm the concept of integration in the field of rural tourism, which includes promoting multi-facets sustainability, empowering the local people, protecting the ownership of resources, helping the development of other economic sectors and activities in moderate scale, and connecting stakeholders. It can also be embedded in local systems (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008), which helps people rethink the relationship between rural tourism and resources (Butler, 1999; Saarinen, 2006). IRT integrates the principles of sustainability, optimizes the use of resources, protects and enhances resources (Butler, 1999; Saarinen, 2006), and links the connected roles and coordination between stakeholders of different aspects (Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Johannesson, 2005; Tinsley & Lynch, 2001). The seven aspects of IRT include the important directions and development guidelines of rural tourism. Important concepts that need to be considered include the establishment and consolidation of rural tourism networks, the ad-

justment of tourism development scale, endogenous and exogenous forces, external funding status, sustainability status, and the degree of local empowerment. These aspects require the interconnected and sustainable development of resources, coupled with the relationships and connections among important local people, to draw the outline of integrated rural tourism development. Tourism industry is a starting force for the development of rural areas. The sustainability in the concept of IRT requires the rational use of rural capital and the establishment of a highly connected local network, in order for the countryside to exert the essence of the tourism industry. In addition to functioning properly, it can reduce adverse effects. All in all, IRT advocates interactive linkages (Butler, 1999; Unwin, 1996) and understanding the role of stakeholder collaboration (Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Johannesson, 2005; Pforr, 2006; Tinsley & Lynch, 2001). In the scope of rural tourism, these seven aspects are the integration of the following integrated features: promoting the multi-facet sustainable characteristics, empowering local residents, internalizing the use and ownership of resources, and assisting other secondary economic sectors and activities.

Destination Branding

Discussions on the meaning of destination branding have been proposed by multiple scholars. Cai (2002) believes that it is a way to identify and distinguish destinations by selecting a combination of consistent factors through the establishment of positive impressions. Gilmore (2002) considers it to be synonymous with destination repositioning, and Hall (2002) considers it to be reconstruction of destination impression. The key point of destination branding is to develop emotional connections between destinations and tourists (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2004). Different brands will affect the perception of tourists' cognition of destinations, thereby determining whether there will be tourists visiting those destinations. In addition to affecting the image of the destinations, it also affects the tourists' willingness of future revisits. The main purposes of the tourism brand are to establish the impression to attract tourists, distinguish itself from the competing destinations, establish positioning to attract high-spending tourists, manage the impression of tourists, and improve the living environment of the destination through the contribution of tourism economy (Park & Petrick, 2006). From the explanation of tourism endogeneity, it can be seen that endogeneity strengthens local dependence, promotes local participation and ownership of resources, as well as retaining the added value of the

destination. This added value forms the impression of the destination to tourists. Therefore, the degree of endogeneity will affect whether the tourism branding will have positive or negative development and the mutual connection and influence between each other. Brands are not impressions, but impression is a core part thereof (Cai, 2002). Consistent branding enhances the producing process of destination impressions to transform into unique brand meaning. Pike (2005) believes that destination branding is considered to be an important aspect of destination management, which can expand opportunities and destinations of visits by tourists, as well as solving the problems of substitutability and lack of differentiation in some destinations in recent years. Boo et al. (2009) quoted the concept of Konecnik & Gartner (2007) to propose a more complete concept of destination branding development, believing that brand equity can fully represent the overall value of the brand, including the five dimensions of Destination Brand Awareness (DBA), Destination Brand Image (DBI), Destination Brand Quality (DBQ), Destination Brand Value (DBV), and Destination Brand Loyalty (DBL). Cai (2002) believes that the impression is the core of a brand. When a destination gradually becomes famous, the impression will be transformed into a brand, and the impression will be covered by the brand

name. Destination branding is a transformation process of impression. When a destination is developed into a name that can be identified, it will affect the willingness of tourists to go visit, whether they will collect information about the destination, and the action to visit to the destination. The concept of brand equity in destinations has more elements to measure the brand development of destinations than in destination impressions. The destination brand awareness, destination brand image, destination brand quality, destination brand value, and destination brand loyalty it includes can better show the diversity and related impacts.

Research Method

Research Framework

The concept of the overall framework of this study is based on the supply and demand sides of tourism development. We must think about the operation and progress of integrated rural development and ensure that tourism development can be properly developed in destinations in order to further attract tourists to destinations for tourism activities. In the development of the tourism development theory, Miossec (1976) discussed the evolution of tourism development, and Butler (1980) established the six stages of

model of tourist area life cycle, showing that the physical changes in the interaction between destinations and tourists. Appropriate tourism development should increase the quality of life required by tourists and residents (Gartner, 1996), and it also requires the integrated development of destinations to attract tourists and continue to drive destinations to move forward. When the destination can develop steadily and moderately, the destination branding can be established to allow tourists to identify. In this way of supply and demand, integrated tourism development can be smoothly carried out.

The main core of the research framework (Figure 1) hereof is based on the tourism system proposed by Gunn & Var (2002) and can be explained in two parts: destinations and tourists. The destination part is formed by the concept of Quality of Life and Management of Living Resource Programme (QLK5-CT-2000-01211-SPRITE) in Supporting and Promoting Integrated Tourism in Europe's Lagging Rural Regions (SPRITE). The tourist part is constructed based on the proposed concept of destination branding (Boo, Busser, & Baloglu, 2009) to construct. Different from only referring to the impressions of destinations, destination branding can unify the tourism elements of tourists and establish des-

tinuation identification, which can further drive the development of destinations to form integrated rural tourism innovation development evaluative indicators.

Research Method

This evaluative indicator explores the development of integrated rural tourism, starting from the concept of integration, and mainly referring to the concept of integrated rural tourism in SPRITE. In exploring the concept of integration, it is found that in addition to the development of destinations, attention must be paid to the response and support of tourists. The concept of destination branding is introduced to provide new ideas for the integrated rural tourism development. This study starts from the two major aspects of supply side and demand side of tourism, adopting the Analytic Hierarchy Process to first divide the indicator system into four evaluation aspects, so as to carry out the preliminary design of the indicator system. From the literatures of rural tourism development, integrated rural tourism, sustainable tourism indicators and so on, 53 important evaluative indicators were collected and listed according to the measured relative relationships and levels.

In this study, for the establishment

and extraction of evaluative indicators, a Delphi questionnaire was first constructed through the review of literature related to integrated rural tourism and destination brandings, and after two questionnaire interviews with experts, evaluative indicators were established after a consistency was reached. An Analytic Hierarchy Process was then used to construct the weights of indicators, so as to facilitate the subsequent evaluation of destinations as shown in Figure 2 below.

Research Results

The preliminary construction of integrated rural tourism innovation development evaluative indicators through the literature requires the opinions and discussions of the industry, government and academia. Five to ten governmental, industrial, and academic research experts in the field of rural tourism are selected in advance, and the selection criteria are to cover all aspects of the development of integrated rural tourism. Therefore, tourism management, marketing management, community development, agricultural development, brand development, and hospitality are taken as cores to cover tourism, hospitality, and tourism management. After constantly discussing alternatives and contacting experts, a total of 21 experts participated in conducting evaluation of

the Delphi questionnaire and the indicator weight at the end.

Construction of Integrated Rural Tourism Innovation Development Indicators

This study starts from the supply side and demand side of tourism, adopting the Analytic Hierarchy Process to first divide the indicator system into four subsystems for the preliminary design of the indicator system. From the literature on rural tourism development, integrated rural tourism, sustainable tourism indicators and so on, 53 important evaluative indicators were collected and listed according to the measured relative relationships and levels. This study refers to the strategy fit concept proposed by Cawley & Gillmor (2008) and sets the seven dimensions of the IRT into three subsystems in the supply side, which are named rural tourism network, rural tourism capital, and rural tourism development sustainability. Each subsystem is divided into individual evaluation dimensions, and the subsystem in the demand side is a rural destination brand. The indicator system is designed to support the future decision-making and planning management, so it is set to have different levels. The integrated rural tourism innovation development evaluative indicator of this study is the construction level of a specific

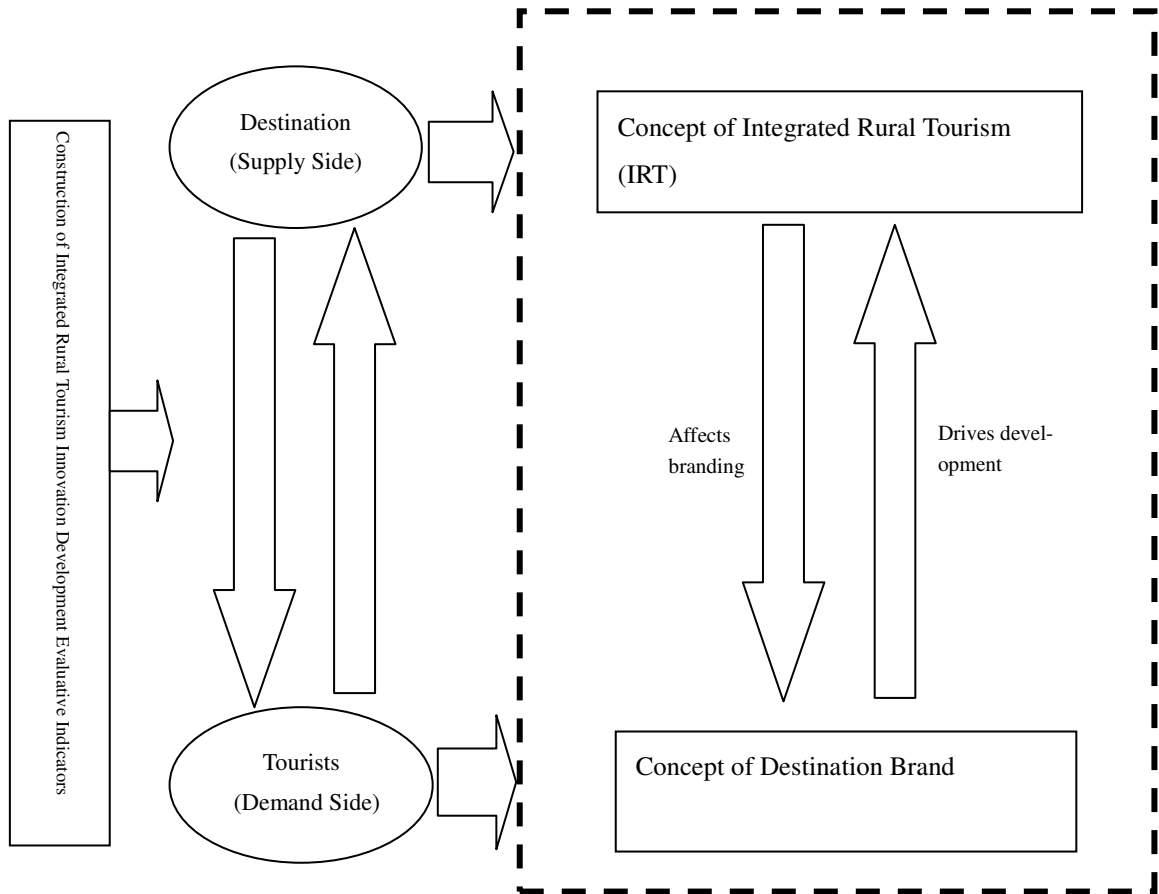


Figure 1 Research Framework

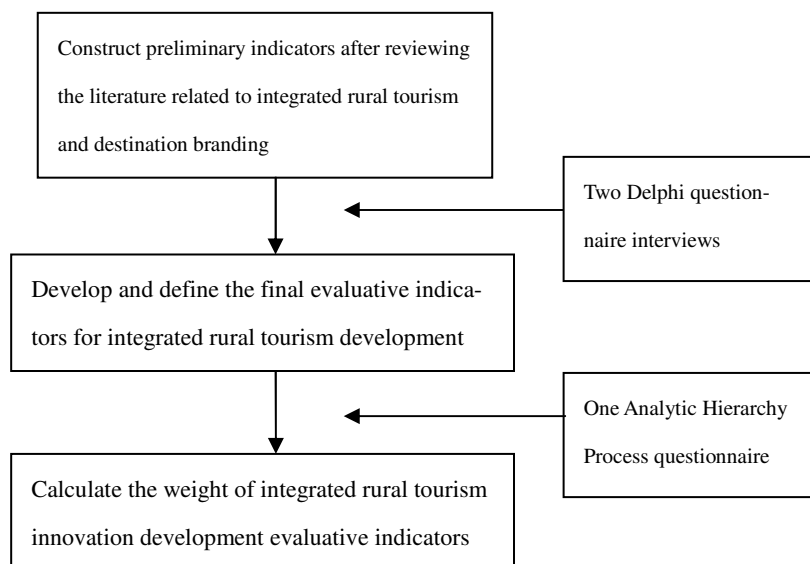


Figure 2 Evaluative Indicator Establishment Process Chart

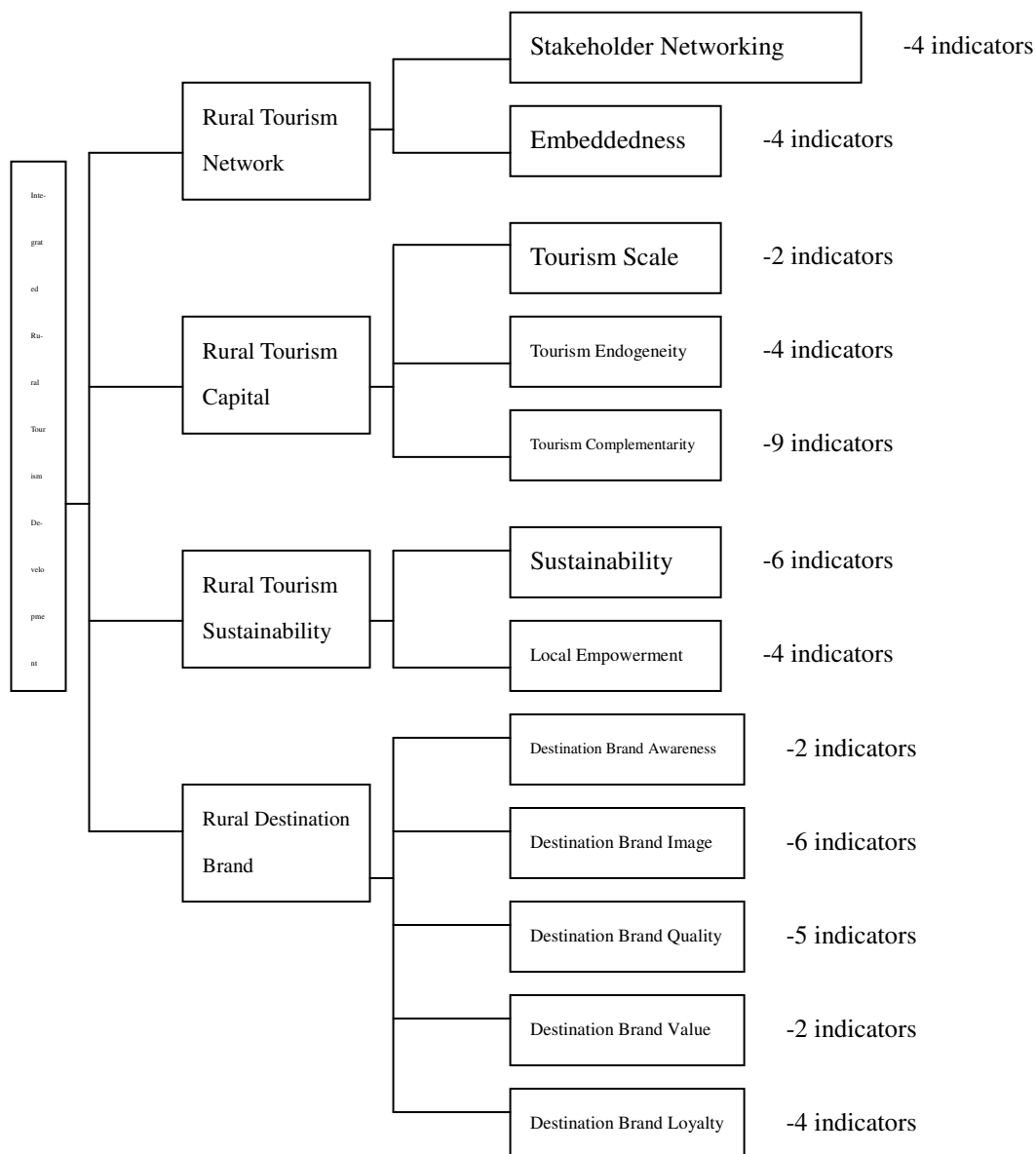


Figure 3 The Final Hierarchical Structure Diagram of the Integrated Rural Tourism Innovation Development Evaluation Indicators

destination, and the so-called specific destination includes coastal areas, rural areas, local capitals or communities. This level of indicators can assist in the accumulation of data of different locations, and it will support indicator analysis at national level in the future.

The indicators of this study include 4 subsystems, 12 dimensions facets and 52 indicators. According to the final results of the Delphi questionnaire, the indicators finally constructed are shown in Figure 3. After the process of expert selection and preliminary construction,

the final number of indicators was reduced from 53 to 52. The texts of subsystems and dimensions were amended but with no increase or decrease. However, the indicators under the subsystems have changed. One question under the rural tourism network subsystem was removed, three questions under the rural tourism capital subsystem were taken out, and six questions under the rural destination brand subsystem were combined into one question. The final integrated rural tourism evaluative indicators have 7 dimensions on the supply side and 8 on the demand side. The supply side includes three dimensions of rural tourism network, rural tourism capital, and rural tourism sustainability, with a total of 33 indicators, while the demand side has 19 indicators under rural destination branding. As for the weight of each dimension of the subsystems, it will need to be calculated through AHP indicator questionnaire in the next stage.

Weight Analysis of AHP Indicators

This study adopts the Expert Choice 2000 to calculate the weight values and Consistency Index (C.I.), as well as using Excel to calculate the consistency ratio (C.R.) to check the consistency of paired-comparison matrix. This study uses the overall indicator weight value to conduct the integrated rural tourism development

evaluations for subsequent cases (Table 1). First, in terms of individual indicators, the top 10 indicators of overall weight are: highly-safe environment (0.0529), tourists' destruction of natural environment (0.0510), waste disposal status (0.0498), leadership status of local tourism activities (0.0465), local people taking lead of the status of tourism development (0.0464), destinations providing preferential plans (0.0460), stakeholder interaction status (0.0398), reasonable accommodation price (0.0354), destination reputation (0.0344), and the use of local agricultural products (0.0306). The above weighted results show two key points. Firstly, it is how tourists use facilities in destinations, and the problems caused by tourists' usage of tourist sites are the most important issues. If the purpose of discussion is the development of integrated rural tourism, this will be a key factor impacting the integration, as the cleanliness and safety of the environment will affect how smooth the destination development will be carried out.

Secondly, it is a very important that the local residents take charge of the destination, and they play also a very important role in the interaction in the destination. If local people can take charge of the future of development and make good use of local resources, including agricultural products and at-

tractions, it will be another key to whether the integration will take place. If we cross-analyze them with the evaluative dimensions, among the top 10 indicators, one falls in the stakeholder networking, one falls in the tourism endogeneity, two fall in the sustainability, two fall in the local empowerment, one falls in the destination brand awareness, one falls in the destination brand quality, one falls in the destination brand value, and one falls in the destination brand loyalty. In terms of tourism supply and demand sides, the top ten overall indicator weights fall mostly on the supply side. This shows that, through expert analysis, in order to achieve a positive integrated supply side of the destination, stable and autonomous development are required, and then the quality of the destination can be ensured, thereby affecting the establishment of the brand. In addition to attracting tourists, it can also help establish continued operation.

This study also analyzes the top 50% of the evaluative dimensions. Three of the top 26 indicators fall into the stakeholder networking, four fall into the tourism embeddedness, two fall into the tourism scale, two fall into the tourism endogeneity, five fall into the sustainability, three fall into the local empowerment, two fall into the destination brand awareness, two fall into the desti-

nation brand quality, two fall into the destination brand value, and one falls into the destination brand loyalty. From the above results, it can be seen that the sustainability subsystem of the rural tourism contains eight of the top 50% indicators, thus it is the most important dimension. It can be seen that the concept of sustainability in integrated rural tourism has a great influence. In addition, the rural tourism network subsystems are also very important in the overall indicator, showing that whether the tourism-related network of the destination is well-developed will be a factor that affects the integrated development of the destination as well. Furthermore, the destination brand subsystems also have important impacts. In addition to the destination brand value, all other destination brand evaluative dimensions have indicators that affect the weight of the top 50 of the overall indicator systems, showing that the evaluations of the tourist side and destination side are both crucial. On the other hand, among all dimensions, the tourism complementarity ranks quite low in the overall weight ranking. Expert analysis shows that whether to increase the complementarity does not affect the integration much, which is somewhat different from the tourism scale and tourism endogeneity in the same subsystem of rural tourism capital. In the development of rural tourism, whether the resources are

Table 1 Comparison Table of Overall Weights of Integrated Rural Tourism
 Innovation Development Evaluative Indicators

Subsystem	Dimension	Indicator	Weight	Weight Value for the whole level*	Ranking by the whole level	
Rural Tourism Network 0.169	1. Stakeholder Networking (0.547)	Status of stakeholders creating rural tourism products	0.245	0.0226	15	
		Status of stakeholders obtaining external supports	0.192	0.0177	21	
		Status of stakeholders holding rural tourism activities	0.132	0.0122	32	
		Status of stakeholder interactions	0.431	0.0398	7	
	1. Embeddedness (0.453)	Local cultural identity	0.26	0.0199	18	
		Status of hiring external tourism consultants for guidelines	0.22	0.0168	25	
		Development status of rural tourism activities subsidized by external units	0.267	0.0204	17	
		Status of local people investing in tourism development	0.253	0.0194	19	
	Rural Tourism Capital 0.173	1. Tourism Scale (0.295)	Parking lot status	0.481	0.0245	14
			Tourist attraction status	0.519	0.0265	12
2. Tourism Endogeneity (0.444)		Status of the use of local products	0.398	0.0306	10	
		Status of the use of local crafts	0.208	0.0160	28	
		Status of local specialty dining and accommodation	0.142	0.0109	36	
		Status of employing local residents in tourism activities	0.252	0.0194	20	
3. Tourism Complementarity (0.262)		Status of the growth of small tourism companies	0.095	0.0043	49	
		Status of employing local residents	0.185	0.0084	40	
		Quality and condition of local tourism services and facilities	0.105	0.0048	47	
		Quality and status of rural cultural assets	0.116	0.0053	45	
		Quality and condition of parks and trails	0.087	0.0039	51	
		Quality and condition of historical monuments	0.072	0.0033	52	
		Quality and status of local developed sales areas	0.098	0.0044	48	
Status of tourism activity subsidy	0.15	0.0068	43			

		Disposable income per person	0.09	0.0041	50
Rural Tourism Sustainability 0.288	1. Sustainability (0.584)	Environmental quality improvement	0.072	0.0122	33
		Status of public transportation	0.101	0.0170	24
		Status of road system and traffics	0.105	0.0177	22
		Status of protection of natural ecological resources	0.125	0.0211	16
		Status of waste disposal	0.295	0.0498	3
		Status of tourists destroying the natural environment	0.302	0.0510	2
	2. Local Empowerment (0.416)	Status of local people participating in tourism-related meetings	0.146	0.0176	23
		Status of local people taking charge of the development direction of tourism	0.386	0.0464	5
		Status of tourism organizations in the area	0.081	0.0097	38
		Leading status of local tourism activities	0.387	0.0465	4
Rural Destination Brand 0.37	1. Destination Brand Awareness (0.137)	Tourism reputation	0.679	0.0344	9
		Name of destination	0.321	0.0163	26
	2. Destination Brand Image (0.143)	Beautiful scenery	0.157	0.0083	41
		Friendly town	0.108	0.0057	44
		Friendly residents	0.145	0.0077	42
		Good recreation opportunities	0.282	0.0149	30
		Interesting cultural attractions	0.212	0.0112	35
		Relaxing atmosphere	0.095	0.0050	46
	3. Destination Brand Quality (0.337)	Quality accommodation	0.094	0.0117	34
		Quality infrastructure	0.126	0.0157	29
		Attractive local cuisine	0.112	0.0140	31
		Clean environment	0.244	0.0304	11
		Highly safe environment	0.424	0.0529	1
	4. Destination Brand Value (0.163)	Reasonable accommodation prices	0.587	0.0354	8
		Reasonable food prices	0.413	0.0249	13
	5. Destination Brand Loyalty (0.221)	Future revisit status	0.115	0.0094	39
		Number of previous visits	0.126	0.0103	37
		Recommending friends and relatives to visit	0.198	0.0162	27
		Special offers provided by destinations	0.562	0.0460	6

*Weight value for the whole level = Weight value of subsystems x weight of dimensions x weight of indicators

** The sum of the weights of the above subsystems, dimensions, and indicators equals to 1

produced within the area, or whether the local products are used will have greater impact on the future integration.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Tourism can penetrate local development and can be integrated in different ways. The alliance, coordination and participation of local stakeholders can lead to direct local income and broad development benefits (Jenkins & Oliver 2001). Therefore, this study starts from the supply and demand sides of the tourism system, and in order to develop the integrated tourism, we need to consider the balance between supply side and demand side. In addition to the basic concepts of integrated rural development, it also covers the concept of destination branding. The core of integrated development is the comprehensive integration of space, manpower, institutions, creativity, economy, society, nature, time, and community (Saxena et al., 2007), so it requires diversified consideration.

When the chain relationship on the supply side can be integrated, it not only can further promote the sustainability of local tourism, but the local area can also establish branding to attract tourists and promote the steady development of destination branding. By measuring the relative relationship between different system facets and indicators, this study

evaluates whether a rural area is more integrated, and where the destination should focus its resources on in the future, so that the development of rural areas can have a future criterion.

Through the analysis of the seven major dimensions of integrated rural development and the concept of destination branding, coupling with the development of sustainability indicators, the preliminary structure of "Integrated Rural Innovation Development Evaluative Indicators" is constructed. The first layer is preliminarily planned to have 4 subsystems, the second layer has 12 dimensions, and the third layer has 53 indicators. The evaluative indicator system of this study is divided into 4 subsystems, namely rural tourism network, rural tourism capital, rural tourism sustainability, and rural destination brand. Each subsystem is divided into different evaluative dimensions.

In this study, 21 experts were interviewed. After two stages of Delphi method was used to remove the lesser indicators and evaluating the indicator weights using the Analytic Hierarchy Process, this study obtains a total of 33 integrated rural tourism development evaluative indicators that cover the three dimensions of rural tourism network, rural tourism capital, and rural tourism sustainability on the supply

side. On the demand side, there are 19 indicators for rural destination branding. The subsystem evaluative indicator weighting results of the Analytic Hierarchy Process are rural destination brand (0.37), rural tourism sustainability (0.288), rural tourism capital (0.173), and rural tourism network (0.169). According to the weight analysis results of the industry, government, and academia, for the goal of tourism development, experts believe that destinations need branding. In addition to creating destinations that can attract tourists, it can also enhance the sustainability of destinations.

Rural sustainability is the second important subsystem. It covers the concept that economy, society, culture and environment can all be sustained, and it is a part that tourism development attaches importance to. The third most important subsystem is the rural tourism capital. It illustrates the resources and extent of tourism development within and outside the area. The fourth most important subsystems are the rural tourism network, which has similar weight as the rural tourism capital. It can be analyzed that in the four subsystems, tourists are the driving force for the tourism development. Although the rural tourism network is also important, it is comparably less important than the other three subsystems.

The top 10 individual indicators in weighting analysis are: highly-safe environment (0.0529), tourists' destruction of natural environment (0.0510), waste disposal status (0.0498), leadership status of local tourism activities (0.0465), local people taking lead of the status of tourism development (0.0464), destinations providing preferential plans (0.0460), stakeholder interaction status (0.0398), reasonable accommodation price (0.0354), destination reputation (0.0344), and the use of local agricultural products (0.0306).

The above weighted results show two key points. Firstly, it is how tourists use facilities in destinations, and the problems caused by tourists' usage of tourist sites are the most important issues. If the purpose of discussion is the development of integrated rural tourism, this will be a key factor impacting the integration, as the cleanliness and safety of the environment will affect how smooth the destination development will be carried out. Secondly, it is a very important that the local residents take charge of the destination, and they play also a very important role in the interaction in the destination. If local people can take charge of the future of development and make good use of local resources, including agricultural products and attractions, it will be another key to whether the integration

will take place. If we cross-analyze them with the evaluative dimensions, the top 10 indicators fall into the dimensions of stakeholder networking, tourism endogeneity, sustainability, local empowerment, destination brand awareness, destination brand quality, destination brand value, and the destination brand loyalty. In terms of supply and demand sides of tourism, the top ten overall indicator weights fall mostly on the supply side. This shows that in order to achieve a positive integrated supply side of the destination, stable and autonomous development are required, and then the quality of the destination can be ensured, thereby affecting the establishment of the brand. In addition to attracting tourists, it can also help establish continued operation.

This study also analyzes the top 50% of the evaluative dimensions. The top 26 indicators fall into the dimensions of stakeholder networking, tourism embeddedness, tourism scale, tourism endogeneity, sustainability, local empowerment, destination brand awareness, destination brand quality, destination brand value, and the destination brand loyalty. The rural tourism sustainability subsystem contains eight top 50% indicators; thus, it is the most important dimension. It can be seen that in the integrated rural tourism development, the concept of sustainability has great in-

fluence. In addition, the rural tourism network subsystems are also very important in the overall indicator, showing that whether the tourism-related network of the destination is well-developed will be a factor that affects the integrated development of the destination as well.

Furthermore, the destination brand subsystems also have important impacts. In addition to the destination brand value, all other destination brand evaluative dimensions have indicators that affect the weight of the top 50 of the overall indicator systems, showing that the evaluations of the tourist side and destination side are both crucial. On the other hand, among all dimensions, the tourism complementarity ranks quite low in the overall weight ranking. Expert analysis shows that whether to increase the complementarity does not affect the integration much, which is somewhat different from the tourism scale and tourism endogeneity in the same subsystem of rural tourism capital. In the development of rural tourism, whether the resources are produced within the area, or whether the local products are used will have greater impact on the future integration.

The SPRITE project's description on the concept of integrated rural tourism is directly and positively linked to the economy, society, culture and natural resources of the rural area, while

seeking to optimize the use of resources. This is a way to promote tourism development, and it can attach greater importance on the local resources and traditions, while sharing the benefits of tourism development. The integrated rural development evaluative indicators constructed in this study are designed for the characteristics of rural areas, reflecting rurality, the use of rural capital, and the issues of rural tourism development. The establishment of the indicators is based on the rural conditions in Taiwan, exploring the elements that rural areas must have and seeking analysis of industrial, governmental and academia researchers who are familiar with rural areas. The established integrated rural tourism indicators have their importance. The results of this study are not entirely the same as those of the general indicator system for sustainable tourism development, as this study focuses on rural development strategies and the concept of integration, so the consideration is more diversified in during the construction of indicators. As this study is an exploratory study, the establishment of indicators is lacking in comparison with other studies, so there were difficulties and applicability issues during the construction of indicators, such as the selection of experts and scholars in various fields, selection of branded rural area, and the complexity of stakeholders in rural areas. In the

future, the indicator system constructed in this study can be used to further explore and compare the suitability of indicators for integrated rural tourism innovation development and the compatibility of indicators.

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